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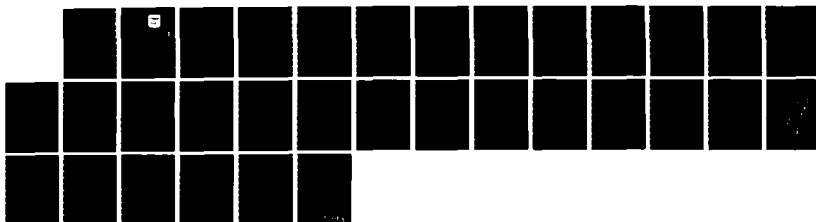
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# STUDENT ESSAY

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EL SALVADOR: A COMMUNIST OBJECTIVE

BY

COLONEL GALILEO CONDE

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

EL SALVADOR: A COMMUNIST OBJECTIVE

INDIVIDUAL ESSAY

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013  
31 March 1986

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Galileo Conde, COL, El Salvador

TITLE: El Salvador: A Communist Objective

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DATE: 31 March 1986 Pages: 19 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

What appeared to be an authentic struggle of the citizens of El Salvador to improve their living conditions has been transformed in the last few years into an immoral intervention of the Soviet Union thru Cuba and Nicaragua. This intervention hopes to establish a totalitarian government that is Marxist in El Salvador. They will do this by taking advantage of every kind of strategy. This essay examines the many dimensions of this strategy.

## EL SALVADOR: A COMMUNIST OBJECTIVE

### INTRODUCTION

The American continent is an international Communist objective. Every country in America has undergone in one form or another different levels of violence from the international communist aggression. Some of them still are under the threat because the developmental process is similar, with characteristic differences that depend on the geographic, political, economic and social situation of each country.

The security of the Latin American countries has been and is constantly threatened by the Marxist subversion. It is concurrently aggravated by other factors like: the interference of supporting communist countries; world disinformation campaigns, local subversion of political and military capabilities, economic, social, and political situations of the Latin American countries and the difficulties or indifference in understanding the problems and causes. It is becoming an integral threat to national security, it threatens to overwhelm the armed forces and constitute a challenge to national responsibility, to the government and to all layers of the particular society. The communist attack is looking to change the way of living to finally install a totalitarian government.

El Salvador, geographically speaking, is a small densely populated country, (see: appendix 1), with an economy based on the export of coffee, sugar cane, and cotton. For more than six years it has been the target of Cuban and Nicaraguan violence, supported by the Soviet Union.



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## SUBVERSION'S ORIGINS

Communism's origin in El Salvador dates back to 1921 when the first communist cell was created as a direct consequence of the revolution in the USSR in 1917. From that point the communist penetration began in El Salvador; the first group of workers and university students were catechized to shape the movement's vanguard. Later, to facilitate the conscientization and ideological training, the popular university was founded as the educational institution for the Regional Workers Federation of El Salvador, strongly politicized, anti-imperialist and Marxist-Leninist. The Regional Federation Headquarters, served as the international propaganda meeting point and included a variety of tendencies: the "reformist," "anarchy-sindicalist," "communist," etc.; later, to consolidate the communist ideology penetration, the first International Communist Cadres arrived: Jorge Fernandez Anaya, member of the Mexican Youth Communist and Ricardo Martinez from the Venezuelan Communist Party. In 1929 the Salvadoran Communist Party (PCS) was created. It began conscientization and infiltration of all social sectors not excluding the armed forces, and planned general armed uprisings perpetrated on the night of 22 Jan 1932; thousands of workers and armed peasants struck some western towns, many innocent people got killed for the only reason of not supporting their ideas or sometimes because they belonged to wealthy families. Every kind of human rights violations against the life and property was perpetrated. The armed forces intervened, controlling the situation in a few days. In the course of time, the communists made the revolt's leaders their heroes



such as the case of Agustin Farabundo Marti. Later and from clandestinity the communist party continued the ideological penetrations in the National University sectors, workers, peasants and organized Facade Fronts in some political parties sustaining a strong socialist-communist tendency.

Since 1966 and with Cuban influence, they intensified the covert activities of organization and mobilization, creating political fronts, masses fronts, and armed units. In 1970, they started a manipulation campaign of the masses, including teaching and peasant sectors, using religious and workers leaders. Kidnapping, political assassination, assaults and mass street manifestations were common. The armed forces, fully aware of their historical responsibilities and because of the chaotic and anarchic situation, overthrew the authoritarian government of General Carlos Humberto Romero in October 1979. Romero was replaced by a civilian-military Junta.

#### CONFLICT DEVELOPMENT

The communist subversion astutely took advantage of the Salvadoran situation, here are some of the factors supporting them:

SOCIAL. The Latin-American societies are quite similar, their development occurs in a framework full of social differences, characterized by separatism and antagonism between some community sectors encouraged by Marxist theory permanently fomenting the class struggle, exploiting the sectors impoverished by the economically powerful social class.

Some other factors aggravating the social situation, are:

- o High population density (240 inhabitants/square kilometer)
- o High illiteracy rate (30 percent).
- o Basic necessities not satisfied: jobs, household, health, food, education, etc.
- o Communist expansionism and development, supported by the communist bloc.

ECONOMIC. The wealth of the country was concentrated in a few families who also controlled the political power, they owned the most fertile soils where coffee, cotton, sugar cane - basic products of the national economy were cultivated. The foreign trade of these products and the National Banking System was in the same hands.

POLITICAL. Other factors originating the general unrest were the people's lack of absolute freedom to elect their government. The armed forces were in some way manipulated by the ruling class (the oligarchy) that favored the continuation of governments imposed by the economic power. The armed forces general consensus didn't support this practice. This provoked coups d'etat in 1944, 1948, 1960, 1961, 1972, and 1979 hoping to stop all kind of abuses that were contrary to the armed forces' professionalism and the interest of the Salvadoran people as well. The officialist system was forced by the manipulation of the electoral process using fraud and imposition. A discriminatory and unfair economic, political and social system distanced from what people desired existed.

MILITARY. Salvadoran armed forces, mentally prepared to defend the national sovereignty and country's integrity. It was trained and oriented for a regular war, low in personnel, ill equipped and with the

limitations of an undeveloped country in logistic, personnel, weapons, material and equipment acquisition. It was principally lacking an ideological foundation to face the current threat: the communist international aggression.

EXTERNAL. Due to the intensive situation related before and the disinformation campaign orchestrated worldwide by the communists, the country was totally isolated, giving place to an institutional crisis in all national ways of life. The indigenous subversion took advantage of it to obtain international support for its cause. El Salvador is fighting a war imposed from abroad, highly ideological, since the terrorist cadres were trained in Cuba, the Soviet Union, Nicaragua, Libya, Vietnam, Algeria and other communist countries. No doubt about it, terrorist acting in El Salvador are following orders obeying the watchword of Marxist Leninist doctrine of world expansion.

CHURCH INFLUENCE. The church has a long tradition of social work among the poor, but it has been deeply divided. In the late 1970's, Archbishop Romero and the Jesuit community became the focal point of church criticism while the Papal Nuncio and four of the other bishops remained wedded to the more traditional role. Today approximately 15 percent of the priests, many of whom are reportedly foreign born, are supporting the insurgency. In the guerrilla base camps in Morazán and Chalatenango, priests are saying mass for the guerrillas.

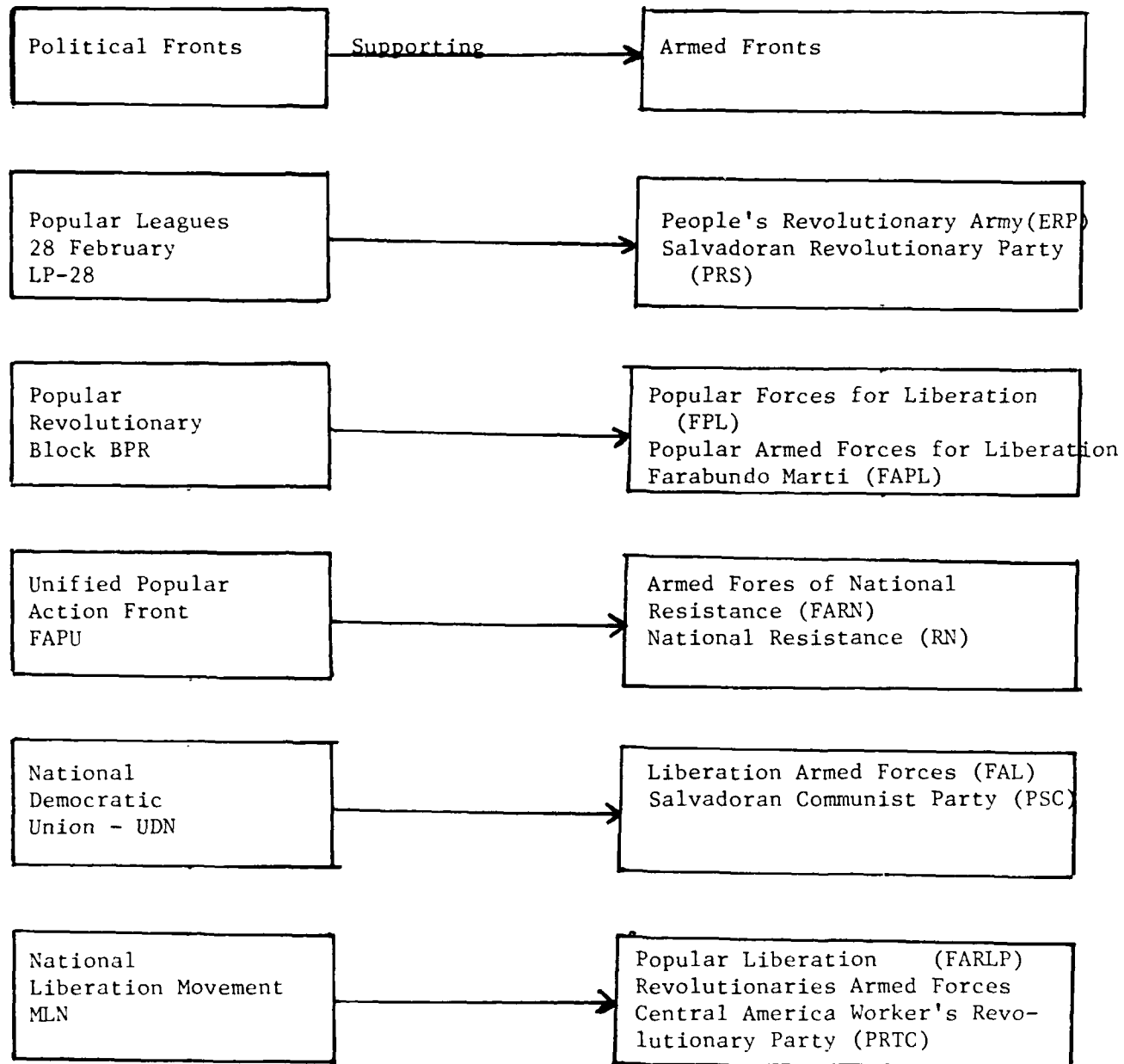
The Jesuits and the Maryknolls have been politically active since the beginning of the Salvadoran insurgency and the Central American University (UCA) remains a center for intellectual opposition and a haven for revolutionaries. In El Salvador, the University, the Maryknolls, the Jesuits and others, in addition to playing active roles

in support of the guerrillas, are effective propagandists. One of the major successes of the insurgency in El Salvador has been the wedding of a radicalized clergy, particularly the Jesuit and Maryknoll orders, and the insurgents. This is a key difference between the fallen revolutions in the past and the movement of today. The Catholic Church is not the only player, however. The effectiveness of the guerrilla propaganda effort can be measured by the volume of anti-Salvadoran pressure put on the U.S. Congress from other religious groups such as the National Council of Churches, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the American Friends Service Committee.

#### TERRORIST FORCES ORGANIZATION

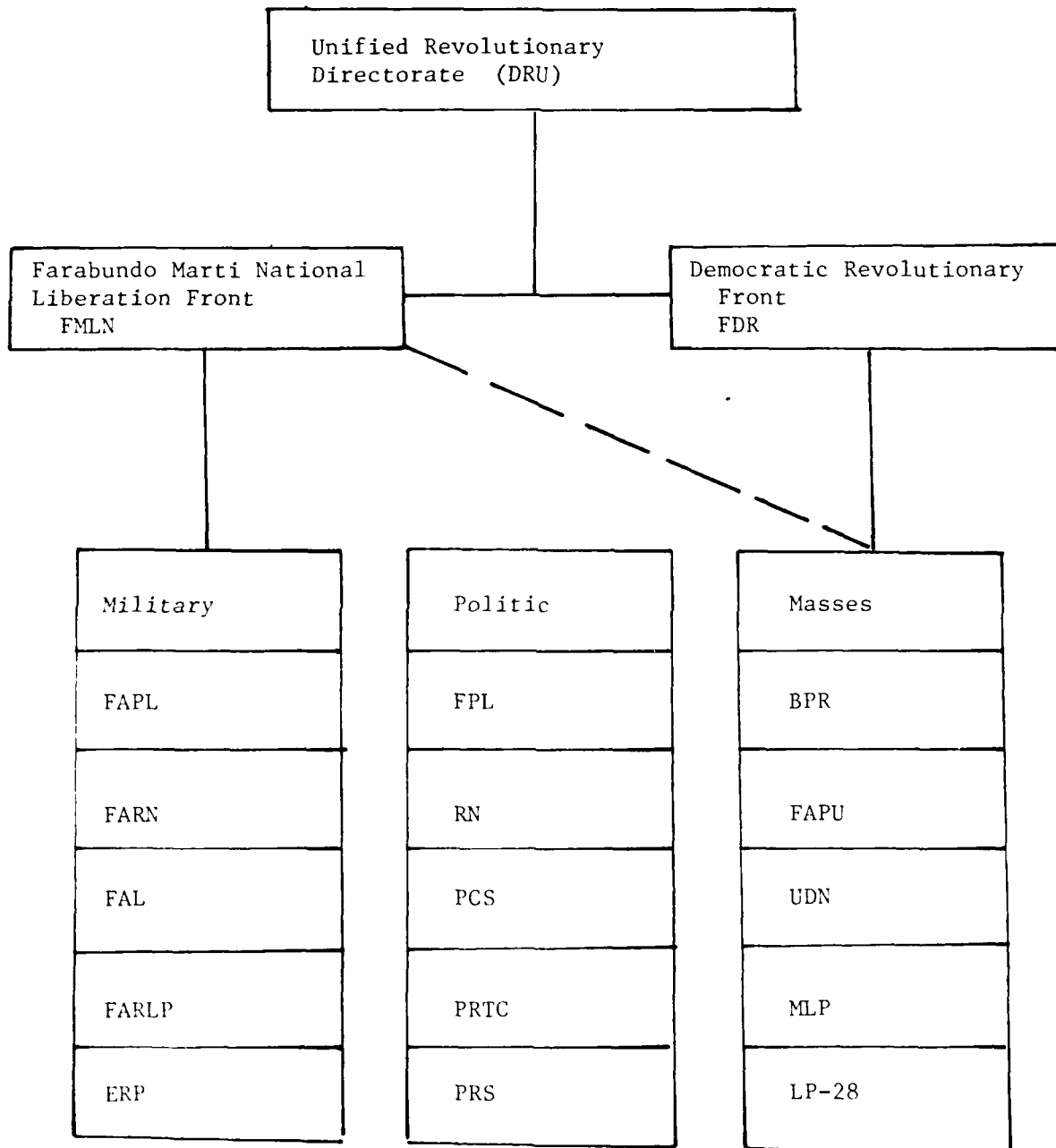
Since 1980, the Salvadoran terrorist forces were grouped in a single organization: Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), unifying the guerrilla military power with their general staff initially located in Nicaragua. For that time the number of armed insurgents (including armed militia), was estimated to range from 9,000 to 11,000, and additional 20,000 to 30,000 masses, mainly family members, provide direct support to the armed cadre of the FMLN.

Each guerrilla organization was able to create a political front, to support their terrorist action, that year, 1980, in April, the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), was established to act as an umbrella political front organization for all the guerrilla fronts and opposition political parties and associations. The political fronts supporting each armed group are as follows:



The Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), though, are the core for the revolutionary actions, politically and militarily speaking, theoretically they are both leading by the : Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU), whose structure we don't know in detail. Only some committees like: International Relations Committee (CORINTER), Finance Committee (COFIN) and the Propaganda Committee.

SUBVERSIVE FORCE STRUCTURE



### SUBVERSION LOGISTIC STRUCTURE

The main logistic support for the subversion is coming from the Communist Bloc, through Cuba and Nicaragua big quantities of weapons, ammunition, equipment and money is routed to support and maintain the armed groups operating in El Salvador.

There are concrete evidences of this massive support. Nicaragua appeared as the major link in this clandestine logistic chain of supply to Salvadoran subversion.

Captured guerrilla documents clearly show Nicaraguan functioning as a main logistic base or in other words the strategic rear, supporting the subversion with 90 percent of weapons and ammunition required to sustain its operations.

In 1985 more than 200 terrorists(different levels) were trained and equipped in Cuba and Nicaragua. Food supply and clothing is internally obtained from the subversion camps close to towns either by a direct buy or force.

From the neighboring countries of Guatemala and Honduras terrorists get another type of supply: shoes, medicines and explosives. Money for terrorist operation come from abroad, via Mexico, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Internally other funds are obtained by different means, like assaults, armed robbery and also by applying a "war tax" to some citizens, this is a common practice.

The Usulután Department is believed to be the major access point for material support arriving from Nicaragua. That is why

all terrorist organizations keep armed groups in this department to secure the supply operations.

There are in the country some relatively small areas known as "Productive Areas." Here also terrorist groups control it especially at harvest time to assure the provision of grains for the next dry season.

Medical care, surgical equipment and medicines are normally provided by International Humanitarian Organizations like: Red Cross, Green Cross, Caritas, Borderless Surgeons, World Surgeons, Medical Health for El Salvador, Solidarity and Health International Committee and others. To support their different fronts, they have the so called Logistic Routes. On 11 June 1985, 29 were confirmed by the armed forces.

#### STRATEGIES, TACTICS AND OBJECTIVES OF TERRORISTS IN EL SALVADOR

STRATEGIES. The terrorists of the FDR-FMLN seek the installation of a Marxist-Leninist government in the country. The basic strategies implemented in order to get control of the situation, are as follows.

POLITICAL WARFARE. Externally based on the International Socialist Movement and Social Democrats and all international organizations from countries supporting them in favor of dialogue with the Napoleon Duarte Administration. Internally they are trying to force the government to share power, especially using the tactics of dialog, mediation and negotiation.

IDEOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE. By presenting the image that conflict is the result of popular reaction against the oligarchical exploitation, and injustice to United States intervention, they



still haven't been able to defeat governmental forces. They call for the organization of the masses as the only means to get in power through a "War of Liberation."

PSYCHO-SOCIAL. By organizing rural zones inhabitants, supported by other mass organizations aimed at perfecting a "local popular power" to be used later as a "social support base," organizing labor unions, associations and urban social nucleus to use them later in a total offensive to overtake the government.

ECONOMIC WARFARE. By destroying the center of production and public services they envision to bring the country's economy to a complete chaos.

MILITARY WARFARE. By conducting attacks against valuable military targets, breaking the morale of the armed forces and attracting attention internally and abroad, they are trying to exhaust the armed forces, maintaining a terrorist force strong enough to threaten strategic objectives.

TACTICS. The tactics employed by the FMLN are as follows:

Ideological/Psychological. Through psychological operations they try to win the minds of the armed forces members including their relatives and civilian populations with the idea of isolating the government and armed forces. Democratic organizations and government officials are also on their list, so they can influence them in order to politically destabilize and isolate the administration from friendly democratic countries.

Internally and abroad the FMLN/FDR is taking advantage of the dialog process, projecting an image of initiative and of a total control of the revolutionary struggle.

Propaganda, disinformation, deception, etc., internally and abroad is a common method used in conjunction or with the support of sensationalist and yellow media, criticizing the government and favoring their own cause. Terrorism against the people is exercised by kidnapping youths and forcing them into guerrilla service. Killing as a way to control the public opinion is another method implemented in their tactics.

Politics. Keeping pressure on the government, democratic organizations and the church they are seeking support for a negotiated dialog as a way to fulfill their selfish interest, blaming the government for delaying the meetings held at "La Palma,"\* where the government held talks with the terrorist forces on 15 October 1984. This was a protocol meeting more than anything else; and at "Ayagualo,"\* where the Salvadoran government and FMLN/FDR conducted a second round of negotiations on 30 November 1984.

Economics. Progressively they seek to destroy the national economy through different means: direct sabotage to infrastructure, centers of work, commerce, industry, etc. Since coffee and cotton represent the country's economic support, they sabotage the production of those basic elements by burning cotton harvest and coffee plants. Economically speaking, they look forward to bringing the country to a complete CHAOS.

Military. Terrorist tactics are as follows: attack governmental forces in position and ambush relief forces in route--mass to destroy vital installations or to cut lines of communication--employ psychological terror and active propagandizing and conduct harassing attack. Added to

\* See appendix 1 for locations of La Palma and Ayagualo

that they always avoid direct confrontations with the armed forces, they run from place to place given the illusion of dominating a large area.

Often, they lure army units to previously chosen areas, set an ambush inflicting many casualties to government forces without using their full strength. By disseminating their units they keep them safe from the effectiveness of Air Force and artillery fire.

Lately, rebels have deployed small groups from the eastern and central fronts to western front, increasing their presence in this area by executing guerrillas as well as terrorist and military actions, giving the impression of dominating the country. In addition they are now returning to urban terrorism especially in the capital city (San Salvador), where they plan to increase activities to support psychosocial maneuvers, and control of masses.

#### OBJECTIVES

POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. By keeping a constant pressure on the government they mean to be successful on demands included in the: Government platform for full participation (FMLN/FDR, Government Plan) and by an extensive international campaign aimed to win political and military recognition, they desperately want to get into power.

ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES. Progressively destroying the economy by:

- o Sabotage of public services, transportation assets, agricultural sector, telecommunications assets, etc.
- o Economic destabilization by instigating labor union strikes.
- o By means of an international campaign and by disinformation, block the United States economic aid.

PSYCHO-SOCIAL OBJECTIVES. Total organizations of masses, urban and rural in the so called Local Popular Power (PPL), aimed at a Popular General Insurrection. The classification of people for integration into terrorist forces are as follows:

- o Vindication struggle
- o Clandestine organization
- o Guerrilla Warfare
- o Self-defense, organization and training, including worker and and labor unions, social associations and sectoral groups.
- o Clandestine base organizations
- o Penetration operations in populated areas (cities, towns, etc.)

The campaign of terror directed at the public and the armed forces is a way of keeping the initiative, destroying the morale of the people and the soldiers' will to fight.

Communists are propaganda masters, they exploit this means by using the following techniques and themes:

- o Exploiting the people's past experiences
- o Awakening the masses' consciousness
- o Specific political tasks
- o Class vindication struggle
- o War development
- o Counter propaganda

Psychologically speaking their major effort is directed to military family and relatives by stimulating soldiers to leave the service (commit desertion).

MILITARY OBJECTIVES. We mentioned before some of the military objectives, but there are some others that must be addressed in this

paper the infiltration of military units especially the Military Academy, the security forces, etc. They have been successful in some cases such as the example of a member of the National Police bombing a gasoline pump in his own garrison in the summer of 1984. Another military objective, is the installation and maintenance of military bases in cities, towns and some other areas so called "in dispute" by them; promotion of "household armament and ammunition" production; clandestine information network and seeking by all means to operate in very populated areas controlled by government forces.

CURRENT SUBVERSION STRATEGY. After six years of struggle the growth of the terrorist forces has stopped, but cadre and combatant experience gained throughout the period is enormous, particularly concerning sound tactics management. Numerically speaking, the strength according to armed forces analysis has been reduced to about 6,000 to 6,500 combatants.

The FMLN high command has decided to revise the current strategy to face the governmental forces, now numerically superior (4 to 1 ratio), well organized and well equipped most of the time.

The social support base source for the combat forces on the other hand is experiencing a setback. That means an ideological retreat and a reduction of popular support, they are less interested in taking power by force. Consequently, to regain it, a lot of effort has to be made and they are resolved to do it using whatever means is available.

Internationally they also are losing support, especially from socialist oriented countries sympathetic to their cause for a long time before. Those countries are: Mexico, Panama, France, West Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, United Kingdom, etc. Reasons for this change are

the implementation of the democratic process in El Salvador. Four rounds of free election have taken place in the last two years and seven political parties have contested them. Consequently, lack of popular support, frustration, military setbacks and the decrease of international support compelled the FMLN high command to develop a new strategy. The new strategy is as follows:

- o Forces Dispersion
  - oo Disperse forces to cover more territory
  - oo Avoid confrontation with government forces
  - oo Small unit operations as follows:
    - ooo Guerrilla units (U.G.) of 5 to 10 members
    - ooo Cells or expansion units (U.E.)
    - ooo Urban Commands (C.U.)
    - ooo Production control unit (U.C.P)
    - ooo Guerrilla columns; temporary formation  
for strategic task accomplishment.
    - ooo Special Selected Forces (F.S.E.)
- o Government forces attrition and demoralization. The former forces distribution is now directed to implement the Prolonged Popular War (GPP), by ambushing, strikes and a lot of booby traps against the government forces.
- o Destruction of the National Economy. Concurrently with their political-military strategy of Prolonged Popular War, economic sabotage must be continued by destroying bridges, electrical poles and towers, centers of work and by impeding cultivation of agricultural products. These actions are to be continued.

- o Manipulation of Masses. To control and influence masses they take advantage of any difference between workers/employers' relationship by carefully looking for support. Sometimes they compromise the organization in this manner. This strategy hopes for a general consensus aimed at a national popular insurrection supported by terrorists and armed guerrillas. The former is considered as a vanguard of people in arms that finally is going to take power.

Finally and because of the existence of some differences between the guerrilla commandants in political and military issues, they are working very hard to consolidate unity and cooperation, the new idea is to create One Party and only One Force.

#### CONCLUSION

This paper presents evidence of the support given by the Soviet Union, Cuba, Nicaragua and their communist allies to Marxist-Leninist guerrillas fighting to overthrow the established Government of El Salvador. The evidence, drawn from captured guerrilla documents, war material, and corroborated by intelligence reports, underscore the central role played by Cuba, Nicaragua and others communist countries beginning in 1979 in the political unification, military direction, and arming of insurgent forces in El Salvador.

From the documents it is possible to reconstruct chronologically the key stages in the growth of the communist involvement:

- o The direct tutelary role played by Fidel Castro and the Cuban Government in late 1979 and early 1980 in bringing the

diverse Salvadoran guerrilla factions into a unified front:

FMLN/FDR.

- o The assistance and advice given the guerrillas in planning their military operations.
- o The series of contacts between Salvadoran communist leaders and officials of several communist states that resulted in commitments to support the insurgents with weapons, equipment and money.
- o The covert delivery to El Salvador of arms, mostly through Cuba and Nicaragua, in preparation for the guerrillas so-called "general offensive."
- o Supporting a front organization known as the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) to seek noncommunist political, support through propaganda.
- o Documents (seized by Salvadoran Forces in a military operation April 1985) also shows the involvement of the Soviet Union, Vietnam, Bulgaria, East Germany and Cuba in providing training to the insurgents.
- o A letter sent to the Sandinista Directorate by four Salvadoran rebel commanders Nov 24, 1983 "Given the level of our confrontation with imperialism and the puppet forces, our process requires a much higher level of logistical assistance. We believe that present circumstance are favorable to take daring steps in that direction."

In short, over the past years, the insurgency in El Salvador has been progressively transformed into a textbook case of indirect armed aggression by Communist power, through Cuba and Nicaragua.



## EL SALVADOR

### SUMMARY DATA (To 1985)

#### GENERAL

Area: 8,260 square miles; 32% agriculture, 26% meadows and pastures, 11% forested and 31% non-agriculture.

Coastline: 190 miles.

Territorial waters claimed: 200 nautical miles.

Major cities: San Salvador (capital: 380,000); Santa Ana (172,300); San Miguel (132,000).

Population: 4,685,000; average annual growth rate 2.7%. Metizos comprise 88%, Indians 6% and Europeans 6% of the population.

Religion: 98% Roman Catholic.

Language: Spanish.

Literacy: 50% in urban areas, 30% in rural.

#### POLITICAL

Legal name: Republic of El Salvador.

Type of government: Republic.

Political subdivisions: 14 departments.

Legal system: Based on Spanish law with some common law; constitution adopted 1962; judicial review of legislative acts in the Supreme Court.

Branches of government: Executive, unicameral legislative assembly of 52 members elected by popular vote and Supreme Court.

Suffrage: Universal over age 18.

Elections: Last elections held April 1985.

Political parties: National Conciliation Party (PCN); Christian Democratic Party (PDC); Salvadoran Popular Party (PPS); Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA); Democratic Action (AD); Popular Orientation Party (POP); Renovative Action Party (PAR); Authentic Institutional Party (PAIS). Political organizations allied with revolutionary groups include Popular Social Christain Movement (MPSC); National Revolutionary Movement (MNR); Independent Movement of Technicians and Professionals (MIPTES). These comprise the Democratic Front (FO) which is allied with the Revolutionary Coordinator of the Masses (CFM) to form the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR). The CRM includes the Popular Revolutionary Bloc (BPR); the Unified Popular Action Front (FAPU); and the 28 February Popular Leagues (LP-28); the National Democratic Union (UDN) and the Popular Liberation Movement (MLP).

Voting strength: (1982 Constituent Assembly elections) PDC, 24 seats; ARENA, 19 seats; PCN, 14 seats; AD, 2 seats; PPS, 1 seat; POP, no seats.

Armed groups: The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) includes the Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU), an alliance of five guerrilla groups: the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN); the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP); the Communist Party of El Salvador/Liberation Armed Forces (PCES/FAL) and the Central American Worker's Revolutionary Party (PRIC). Extreme rightist vigilante organization with links to government and military include the Secret Anti-Communist Army; the National Democratic Organization (ORDEN); the White Warriors Union (UGB); the Death Squadron (EM); the White Hand (MANO) and the organization for liberation from Communism (OLC).

Other groups: The military; 100 prominent families: General Confederation of Trade Unions (CGS); Federation of Construction and Transport Workers Unions (FESIN-CONSTRAINS); Catholic Church; Salvadoran National Association of Education (ANDES); Salvadoran Communal Union

(UCS); United Confederation of Workers (CUT); Popular Democratic Unity (UPD); National Association of Private Enterprise (ANEP); Productive Alliance (AP); National Federation of Small Businessmen (FENAPES).

Major imports: Food, oil, machinery, vehicles, chemicals, metals, fertilizer.

Major exports: Coffee, cotton, sugar, woods.

Major industries: Food processing, textiles, clothing, petroleum products.

Agriculture: Major cash crops - cotton, sugar, coffee; major food crops - corn, rice, beans.

Fishing: 5,487 tons (1978).

Railways: 375 miles; 285 miles privately owned, 90 miles government owned.

Roads: 6,200 miles; 938 miles bituminous, 813 miles gravel, 2,750 miles earth.

Vehicles (1979): 75,000 passenger cars, 58,000 trucks and buses.

Ports: 2 major (Acajutla, La Union); 2 minor.

Civil air: 5 major transport aircraft.

Airfields: 160 total, 148 usable; one with runway over 8,000 ft.

Telecommunications: 76,000 telephones; 1.4 million radios and 180,000 TV receivers.

## VITAL STATISTICS

Age Distribution: 0-14: 45.1%; 15-64: 51.5%; 65+: 3.4% (1975-80, UNFPA). Median Age: 17.2 years (1980, UNFPA).

Population Density: 515 inhabitants per square mile (1977, UN).

Population Distribution: 58.9% rural (1980, UNFPA).

Population Growth Rate: 2.7% per year.

## HEALTH CARE

Hospital Beds: 16.6 per 10,000 population (1977, WHO).

Doctors: 2.71 per 10,000 population (1977, WHO).

Maternal Mortality: (data not available)

Infant Mortality: 50.8 per 1,000 live births (1978, UN).

Life Expectancy: male - 60.0 years, female - 64.5 years (1975-80, UNFPA).

## ECONOMIC

GDP: \$3.5 billion (1981); real growth rate -9.5% (1981).

Balance of trade: Imports, \$981 million (c.i.f., 1981); exports, \$793 million (f.o.b. 1980).

Budget: Revenues, \$1.06 billion; expenditures, \$1.58 billion (1981).

Aid: Economic - US, international organizations and other Western countries; military - US.

Major trade partners: US, CAQM, EC, Japan.

## MAJOR NEWS MEDIA

Newspapers: La Prensa Grafica (121,500 daily 164,500 Sunday); El Mundo (51,000); El Diario de Hoy (112,300 daily 131,200 Sunday); Diario Latino (36,000); Diario Oficial (2,200).

Radio and television: government-owned Radio-difusora Nacional de El Salvador operates 4 stations; 55 private stations.

## DEFENSE

Total armed forces: 33,000 (includes National Guard, Treasury Police, and National Police).

Para-military forces: 9,000 (Civil Defense; 60,000-80,000).

Available manpower: 1,069,000; 657,000 fit for military service.

Annual military expenditure: \$157.5 million  
(includes \$48.5 million Public Security  
budget, 1983).

## DEFENSE PRODUCTION

Nil.

Alliances and organizations: CAQM, IAEA, ICAO,  
UN, OAS, Seabeds Committee and others.

### ARMY BATTLE ORDER

Manpower: 22,500.

Reserves: 30,000.

Organization: 5 infantry brigades; 2 artillery  
battalions; 1 engineer battalion; 1 air defense  
battalion; 1 mechanized cavalry regiment;  
2 commando companies; 1 paratroop battalion;  
1 AA artillery battalion.

NB: These are expandable to regimental size on  
mobilization of the 30,000 reserves.

Equipment: Tanks: 12 AMX-13, 3 M-3 lt. tanks;  
Armored cars: 12; APCs: 20 UR-416s,  
10 M-113; Artillery: 30 105mm howitzers;  
Mortars: 81mm; RCL: 57 mm.

RL: LAW

### NAVAL BATTLE ORDER

Manpower: 130 officers and men.

Fleet: 4 aluminum-hulled patrol craft;  
25 motorized launches.

### AIR FORCE BATTLE ORDER

Manpower: 1,000.

Organization: 1 fighter bomber squadron with  
4 Ouragans, 6 A-37s; 1 transport squadron  
with 2 DC-6, 5 Aravas, 16 C-47s, 6T-41s,  
2 C-54s, 2 C-123; Other equipment includes  
some T-11s, 3 T-34s, Cessna T-41s, 1A1  
OM-170s, 10 T-6s, 16 Bell UH-1Hs, 3 Lamas,  
1 Alouette III, and 1 FH-1100 helicopter,  
40-2 Spolter Aircraft.

Major air bases: Ilopango.



#### D. El Salvador.

##### 1. Geography.

a. El Salvador, about the size of Massachusetts, is a small section of coastal plain and volcanic foothills mid-way down the Central American isthmus, on the Pacific Ocean. To the north lies Honduras, and to the east is Honduras. It is separated from Nicaragua on the southeast by the Gulf of Fonseca. The country's coastline is about 190 miles long.

b. El Salvador is broken up by mountain ranges running from east to west, forming three distinct regions: a hot, narrow Pacific coastal belt on the south; a subtropical central region of valleys and plateaus, where most of the population lives; and a mountainous northern region. Almost all of the arable land is under cultivation, and coffee is planted high on the mountains.

##### 2. Climate.

a. El Salvador's climate, which is semi-tropical, is governed essentially by its altitude. The country is in the Central American Pacific rainfall belt and, although there are marked climatic contrasts between the central plateau and the mountain-fringed zones in the north and south, seasonal and diurnal variations are moderate. The climate is generally temperate and pleasant with only an occasional severe rainy season.

b. Temperatures generally vary with altitude, with maximum heat and humidity along the coastal lowlands, while the central plateau has a temperate to semitropical climate. Coolest temperatures are found in the northern mountains. Average minimum annual temperature is 65° F and maximum 90° F. San Salvador, at an elevation of 2,170 feet, has an average 24-hour temperature of 75° F with relative humidity at 73%. The national average reading is 70° F. March-May are the warmest months, and November-February are the coolest.

c. The rainy season lasts from May to October, although it sometimes extends into early December. Precipitation during the wet season averages about 10 inches, monthly, usually limited to afternoon showers. However, in June and September temporales, or heavy rains, bring a persistent overcast and torrential downpours which can last from several days to several weeks. During the rest of the year there are usually only light showers. The average annual rainfall is approximately 72 inches, with occasional extremes from 58 to 92 inches.

d. El Salvador is rarely affected by the winds and hurricanes that often strike the surrounding areas of Central America. Although the country occasionally suffers from fringe effects of tropical storms, for the most part it is out of the path of the most serious disturbances. Gulf of Mexico hurricanes usually miss El Salvador, as do the Pacific hurricanes, known as cordonazos, which travel north up the western coast of the isthmus of Mexico.

### 3. People.

a. In 1984, the population, which is remarkably homogeneous with almost 90 percent of mixed Indian and Spanish extraction, was estimated at 4.8 million, making it the most densely populated country in Latin America. The average annual growth rate of about 3.0 percent means that the population should double every 25 years. The high birth rates over the past several decades and the increasingly lower death rates have led to a progressively younger and more dependent population, with an estimated 46 percent of the people being under 15 years of age.

b. Spanish is the official language and is spoken by almost everyone including most Indians. Although the dominant religion is Roman Catholicism, separation of church and state is guaranteed by the constitution and there is complete freedom of worship. The literacy rate is believed to be about 50 percent in urban areas, but dropping to 30 percent in rural areas.

c. The ongoing civil strife in El Salvador that began in 1979 has resulted in large numbers of displaced persons. Although estimates vary widely, it is thought that at least 4% of the country's population has been displaced because of internal violence. The northern departments of Chalatenango, Morazan, and Cabanas, and the San Salvador Metropolitan Area have been the areas most severely affected by the influx of displaced persons.

d. El Salvador is characterized by an unusually low urbanization ratio for its level of development. Moreover, a high proportion of the urban population lives in small towns. Consistent with the low level of urbanization, rural to urban migration has not been very great; however, small towns have been growing less rapidly than large towns and the Metropolitan area of San Salvador has emerged as the dominant urban growth center.

### 4. History.

a. As elsewhere in Central America, frequent revolutions have marked El Salvador's history as an independent state, although relative stability was achieved in the period 1900-30 and in the 1950s. Since the 1931 election of General Maximilian Hernandez Martinez, every succeeding President has been an army officer with the exception of one provisional executive who served 4 months. In late summer of 1960, the constitutional government of Lieutenant Colonel Jose Mario Lemus alienated most of its popular support in a series of clashes with demonstrating university students, and on October 26, 1960, it was overthrown in a bloodless coup.

b. El Salvador, with its large population of poor landless peasants and a tradition of tight control of the national economy by a small elite of wealthy families in alliance with the military, is now paying the price for years of failure to address the problems of landlessness and poverty. The current civil war can trace its roots to the suppression of a Communist-inspired peasant uprising in 1932, in which an estimated 30,000 peasants were killed. The events of 1932 are well-remembered in El Salvador, and the memory of machete-armed peasants on the rampage helps to explain the attitudes of both the

extreme right in El Salvador and the succession of military and military-supported Governments which have ruled El Salvador ever since. Similarly, 1932 continues to inspire the revolutionary left.

c. The 1970s saw the rapid growth of popular organizations clamoring for reform and democracy, and also the founding of several revolutionary organizations which grew from a group of feuding terrorist bands into guerrilla armies by the end of the decade. Various attempts at reform were blocked by the political right, as in 1972 when an alliance of Christian and Social Democrats led by Jose Napoleon Duarte and Guillermo Ungo, appeared to have won national elections, but were arrested and sent into exile by the military.

d. The Sandinista victory in Nicaragua in 1979 convinced a group of young leftist and centrist Army officers that reform was necessary if El Salvador was to avoid revolutionary war. In October of that year they staged a coup and overthrew the rightist government of General Carlos H. Romero, setting up a military-civilian junta which included several prominent leftist politicians, including Ungo. Hopes for peaceful reconciliation with the still-feuding revolutionary organizations were frustrated, however, and the junta's failure to establish control over the security forces and the rightist vigilante groups associated with them led to the resignation of the civilians from the junta early in 1980. Ungo and others joined forces with the revolutionary left, and the young officers who led the October coup, including Colonel Armaldo Adolfo Majano, were forced from power. (Majano later went into exile.)

e. With the formal alliance of the various guerrilla organizations (the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, or FMLN) and civilian opposition groups (the Democratic Revolutionary Front, or FDR), the civil war began in earnest. A new junta was formed, headed by Duarte and supported by his Christian Democratic Party (many Christian Democrats had left the Party to join the FDR) which announced a series of sweeping economic and social reforms. This move was vigorously supported by the United States. The reforms have met with limited success, however, and the basic problem of establishing effective civilian control over the security forces has yet to be solved.

f. In March 1982, legislative elections were held and the centrist Government of Jose Napoleon Duarte and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) was defeated. Although it gained the most seats (24) in the Legislative Assembly of any party, the PDC could not muster enough support to stay in power. The Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), a right-wing party headed by former Army Major Roberto D'Aubuisson and second largest vote-getter in the election, was able to establish a coalition with other right-wing parties and form a Government.

g. Most observers agreed that neither the Government forces nor the FMLN insurgents are capable of a military victory without some intervention from outside forces. In late 1982 and early 1983, a series of guerrilla offensives led to urgent appeals to Congress from Reagan Administration officials for more military aid to El Salvador, although Congress has been reluctant to comply with Administration requests. The three U.S.-trained battalions have performed well, but military analysts contend that without a more active role for U.S. advisors and an expanded U.S. presence, there is little chance that the FMLN will be defeated.

h. In 1984, Duarte's ascent as this country's first directly elected civilian president in 50 years marked an important accomplishment. The armed forces, which helped to steal an election from Duarte in 1972, now tolerates him in part because his election led the U.S. Congress to approve sharp increases in military aid.

i. But hopes appear dim for an early peace settlement in talks launched by Duarte in October, 1984. The armed forces and the rest of the conservative establishment reject the insurgents' demands for constitutional changes that effectively would grant a share of power to the rebels. The armed forces seemed convinced that a military victory is possible in the long run, and the nation's second largest party has come out against the peace talks altogether.

j. The left wing (FMLN) shows no sign of substantially softening its position in the talks. It remains strong in about a quarter of the country and stubbornly resists military defeat.

k. The U.S. government, which says it is not supporting the Christian Democrats as wholeheartedly as it did last year, appears satisfied that Duarte is hemmed in, according to U.S. and Salvadoran political observers. Washington seems to fear that a leftward move by Duarte would alienate the right and upset the existing political equilibrium.

#### 5. Political Conditions.

a. El Salvador's political structure is established by a constitution that entered into force in December 1983. The constitution was written by a constituent assembly elected in a direct vote in 1982. The 1982 elections for the assembly were part of a program of democratization agreed to among the military officers responsible for the coup in 1979 and the Christian Democratic Party. Automatic registration for the elections was offered to the political parties allied with the guerrilla umbrella organization, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), but rejected by them.

b. Jose Napoleon Duarte was elected president on May 6, 1984. Eight candidates representing a broad spectrum competed in the first round. Jose Napoleon Duarte, a founder of the Christian Democratic Party, won 54% of the votes in a run-off against ARENA (National Republican Alliance) candidate Roberto D'Aubuisson. Over 80% of the electorate went to the polls.

c. Despite communist subversion, rightwing terrorism, crushing economic difficulties, and a history of repression, the people of El Salvador had persevered in constructing democratic institutions. The legislative and municipal elections held in the spring of 1985 provided the Christian Democratic Party of President Duarte with a resounding victory.

d. Some of Duarte's strongest opponents, however, are outside the arena of electoral politics and will be little affected by the elections. Specifically, both the nation's conservative establishment - including the business community and influential elements in the armed forces - and its Marxist-led guerrilla movement are resisting Duarte's efforts to achieve a



national reconciliation by bridging the political gap between them. They have restricted pursuit of his declared policy goals of negotiating an end to the five-year-old war, prosecuting past human rights violators and rebuilding the economy.

e. El Salvador is a member of the United Nations and several of its specialized agencies, and the Organizations of American States (OAS). It has aligned itself with non-Communist Western democratic countries. It has no relations with Cuba but has trade relations with a few of the Communist-bloc countries.

## 6. Economy.

a. Severe pressure exists on El Salvador's limited arable land and exploitable natural resources. High illiteracy, unemployment, and underemployment reduce opportunities in both agriculture and industry for the highly regarded and productive Salvadoran workers.

b. El Salvador's small industrial sector, mostly related to the processing or production of light consumer goods, has developed significantly in the last two decades. The economic infrastructure such as roads, electric power, and commercial banking facilities, is fairly well developed. The economy is still primarily agricultural, with coffee representing more than 50% of total exports, followed in value by cotton and sugar. Corn, beans, and sorghum are the chief subsistence crops.

c. The United States is El Salvador's principal trading partner, taking about 32% of its exports (mostly coffee, sugar, and shrimp) and providing 29% of its imports (mainly manufactured goods, vehicles, and machinery). Private U.S. investment in El Salvador is estimated at \$100 million, primarily in banking, refining, oil importing, and manufacturing. The estimated 1984 GNP was \$2.1 billion.

## 7. Military Overview.

a. Constitutionally, the president of El Salvador is the commander in chief of the nation's armed forces and exercises control through the minister of defense. The senior military officer is the Chief of the general staff. Subordinate to the minister of national defense and to the president, he commands the forces in the field. Operational control extends from his headquarters directly to the chiefs of the navy and air force, as well as the reserves and the police forces.

b. Force Summary 1984. El Salvador's armed forces, which total approximately 25,000 and are being extensively trained by 55 U.S. military advisers, will continue to increase in size. Realistically, the armed services will probably total no more than 45,000 personnel. El Salvador prescribes selective military conscription for one year. In addition to the regular armed forces, para-military forces include a national guard of 3,500; national police of 4,000 and treasury police of 2,000. There is also the Orden, or territorial civil defense forces consisting of 70,000. It is reported that no more than 2,000 Orden personnel have active roles.

c. Army. The 22,400-man army consists of six infantry brigades, one mechanical cavalry regiment, one artillery brigade (two battalions), one engineering battalion, one anti-aircraft artillery battalion, one paratroop and one special forces battalion (two groups). Reserves consist of 12 fantry battalions.

d. Navy. The small navy of 350 men and officers have three bases located at Acajutla, La Libertad and La Union. The merchant fleet comprises seven vessels totalling 2,922 GRT.

e. Air Force. The 2,400-man air force is composed of two fighter squadrons, one light COIN squadron, one reconnaissance unit, one transport squadron, two helicopter squadrons and one training detachment. Air bases are located at San Salvador, with a new helicopter base under construction at San Miguel.